

## **STATE STATISTICIAN'S NOTE**

We are pleased to present the 1998-1999 edition of the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics. This bulletin is a cooperative effort between the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Service and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. The data presented in this bulletin were made possible by the voluntary cooperation of thousands of farmers and businesses in Kentucky who respond to our many surveys. This joint effort is essential to maintain reliable facts on changes occurring in Kentucky agriculture. All Kentucky citizens and data users owe them a debt of gratitude for taking the time to complete the surveys.

A special thanks goes to the dedicated staff of field and telephone enumerators who have spent many hours collecting data from the Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses selected on our surveys. These enumerators are our ambassadors to the agricultural community throughout the Commonwealth.

Agriculture is the Commonwealth's largest industry representing over \$3.9 billion in sales from the farm gate in 1998. This past year has been an extremely challenging one for producers across Kentucky. Large carryover stocks for crops and large inventories of livestock had a dramatic impact on prices that farmers received during the year. Management decisions become extremely important as profit margins narrow. Current reliable statistics are the critical component that provides a basis for sound financial and production decisions.

We successfully completed the 1997 Census of Agriculture and released results for Kentucky in early February. Information from the AG Census was widely distributed to data users and data resource entities and portions are contained in this bulletin. The Census of Agriculture is the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data tabulated for every county in the Nation. It is also the sole source of data for farms classified by size, tenure, type of organization, market value of farm products sold, and type of enterprise. The Census provides an important "snapshot" of the Commonwealth's agriculture and shows that *America Counts on Agriculture!*

The staff of the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Service is dedicated to serving the agricultural data needs of all users. Please contact us anytime with your questions, comments and requests for information.

Sincerely,

Leland E. Brown  
State Statistician